



**CITY OF WALESKA
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
February 17, 2025**

Present: Mary Helen Lamb - Mayor
Peter Brown - Councilmember
Dennis Cochran - Pro Tem
Eddie Blackwell - Councilmember
Logan Patrick - Councilmember
Michael Greene - Councilmember
Kristi Bosch - Councilmember
Kim Kirsch - City Clerk/City Manager
Robyn Smith - Receptionist
Chris Lumpkin - Water Maintenance
John Meier - City Attorney
Lamar Rogers - Turnipseed Engineers
Tacie Bracken - Consultant

Item 1: Call to Order

Mayor Mary Helen Lamb called the meeting to order, with a quorum present.

Item 2: Pledge of Allegiance/Innovation

Mayor Lamb led the Pledge to the Flag

Item 3: Five Minute Public Hearing

None

Item 4: Consideration to Approve Regular Council Meeting Minutes February 3, 2025

Mayor Mary Helen Lamb asked for a motion to approve the Regular Council Minutes for February 3, 2025. A motion was made by Councilmember Brown, seconded by Councilmember Cochran, and approved by all members present.

Item 5: Blue Cypress consulting – Kat Onore – Vision Zero / Cherokee Co. Safety Action Plan

- Ms. Onore gave a presentation on Vision Zero in which she went over data pertaining to the safety of our roadways. She requested the City of Waleska adopt a resolution on this issue. There will be no financial

requirements of the city. The objective is to have better paint on roadways, reflective stickers for signage, rumble edging on roads, to name a few. A motion was made by Councilmember Bosch as yea, Councilmember Brown as yea, Councilmember Greene as yea, Councilmember Patrick as nay, Councilmember Cochran as nay, Councilmember Blackwell as nay, Mayor Lamb as yea with the resolution being approved.

Item 6: Cherokee County – Brantley Day – Discuss Land Bank

- Mr. Day presented data for the proposed Cherokee Regional Land Bank to the council. In this presentation Mr. Day went over: what is a Land Bank, How are Land Banks formed, Why form a Land Bank, When and how did Land Bank discussions start, How would a Cherokee County Regional Land Bank operate, How is the Land Bank funded, What if a city chooses not to participate at this time, Can the Land Bank complete a project within a non-participating city, What’s the current resolution proposed and the 2025 timeline for the Land Bank.
- The gist of the presentation was that Cherokee County would like to have more “affordable housing” for “professionals”. Professionals were defined loosely as nurses, other medical professionals, emergency workers, teachers and the like. This is due to the growth of Cherokee County and the types of professionals finding employment in our area but limited “affordable housing”. The board would consist of 9 members. The members would be – one person for the county, one person for each city within the county, one person for the co-ed, and one person for at-large.
- There will be continuing communication between Cherokee County and the City of Waleska on this topic.

Item 7: Tacie Jo Bracken – discuss city savings account status and employee sick time

- Mrs. Bracken went over the amended budget for FY2025 once again with the council. This was necessary as not everyone was able to attend the past couple of meetings due to illness and family emergencies. Mrs. Bracken broke down how she is now dividing the salaries of the employees of the city between the water fund, sanitation fund, and the general fund. A motion was made to approve the amended budget by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Cochran, and approved by all members present.
- Mrs. Bracken discussed taking two savings accounts the city has had invested in a couple of local banks and moving them to a better interest-bearing account. The amounts of the balances are \$10,000.00 and \$2,500.00. Last year one account made around \$10.00 in interest and the other less than that. A motion was made to approve combining

these amounts and reinvesting by Councilmember Cochran, seconded by Councilmember Patrick, and approved by all members present.

- Mrs. Bracken asked the council to clarify the accrual limits of employees' sick time. It was decided that on January 1st of 2024 that all sick time would be reset to 80 hours. However, the motion recorded in the minutes and the way the employee handbook read differ as to number of hours an employee can accrue. The employee handbook states an employee can only accrue 80 hours and the motion recorded in the minutes states employees can accrue 472 hours. After much discussion of various scenarios, it was decided that as of January 1st of each year employees will receive 80 hours of sick time for that year and will cap out at 100 hours of sick time for the year. That breaks it down to only being able to roll over 20 hours of sick time from one year to the next. A motion was made to approve this policy by Councilmember Blackwell, seconded by Councilmember Cochran, and approved by all members present. Mrs. Kirsch will work with Mrs. Smith to update the employee handbook and the payroll system.

Item 8: GEFA Loan

- This loan would be for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. The amount of the loan will be \$633,000.00. GEFA may award the city project principal for forgiveness of \$284,850.00. The origination fee is payable in one payment of \$9,495.00 which will come out of the water fund per Mrs. Bracken. This has been presented to the council in past meetings and approved during those meetings. This project is only to determine the inventory, not to repair. Repairs are to be determined of course, and that data will not be available until the inventory is complete. There is a possibility that the full amount of funds will not be needed. This is something that is required for the city to do. A motion was made to approve the GEFA loan by Councilmember Cochran, seconded by Councilmember Patrick, approved by all members present.

Item 9: Water Applications and Fees – City of Waleska Code of Ordinance

- There was discussion about the current procedures for late fees, cut-off fees, broken lock fees, and the procedure for sending out monthly statements along with two phone calls a month to customers as a reminder they are about to have a late fee of 10% or to have their water turned off. The decision was made to update our code of ordinance to eliminate the language that “provided no service shall be discontinued for nonpayment until the water system as provided the consumer with a reminder notice”. Mrs. Kirsch will work with the City Attorney in the coming week to have the wording changed in the ordinance. The city will also update the message at the bottom of each customers bill to reflect the new code. After that the city will no longer send out phone call reminders. The process to have the code of ordinance official will

mean having a first and second reading. At the second reading the council can vote yea or nay. If that vote is a yea then Mrs. Kirsch will send the document to municode for codification. After that the website will be updated and the public made aware through social media, the city's website and perhaps a flyer with the regular monthly bill mailing.

Item 10: Water System Report

- Mr. Rodgers with Turnipseed Engineers informed the council that he had made a site visit to the Reinhardt University campus with Mr. Lumpkin. There is a chance the issue with the two main meters flip flopping readings could be a pressure release valve issue. Mr. Lumpkin has turned the meter off at Fincher Road to test this theory. Mr. Lumpkin and Mr. Rodgers will report back to the council on their findings.
- Mr. Rodgers mentioned that the meter located on Hwy. 108 does not have a backflow but that has nothing to do with any possible leaks.

Item 11: City Manager's Report

- Mrs. Kirsch updated the council that she and Mr. Lumpkin had gone out to 175 Forest Glenn to inspect and take photos of where the landscape damage occurred from a recent water leak repair. The homeowner had presented a bill for the replacement of the sod, mulch, and rocks at the last council meeting. The bill/bid seemed high. Mr. Lumpkin and Mrs. Kirsch decided Mr. Lumpkin will replace the mulch to match what the homeowner had, replace a few pieces of sod, the rocks that were in the original photo Mrs. Kirsch retried from google earth were on site but buried in mud. Mr. Lumpkin let the council know he dug up the rocks, cleaned them and put them back in place. He also replaced the mulch. He will replace the sod in the next few days depending on the weather. He also talked with the homeowner and informed him the city will do the work.
- Mrs. Kirsch updated the council on the Buice property/signature on easement agreement. Mr. Lumpkin and Mrs. Kirsch went to the Buice home and were invited in by Mrs. Buice who kindly signed the document. Mrs. Kirsch notarized the document and Mr. Lumpkin served as witness. Mrs. Kirsch has given this to the City Attorney, Mr. Meier, who will have this recorded ASAP.
- Mrs. Kirsch updated the council on an email she had received from History Cherokee concerning the future round-about in Waleska. The email basically said that in all likelihood the current historic homes near the 4-way stop will not be impacted if the round-about is installed. History Cherokee will advocate for these homes with GDOT if necessary, which may shift the project towards the convenience store.

- Mrs. Kirsch informed the council that she had received a couple of complaints that large trucks are parked in the old RM Moore Elementary School parking lot, 471 Grady Street. The complaints are coming from the neighbors across the street from the school. These trucks leave the parking lot around 2 and 3 in the morning, shining their lights in the windows of the homes and waking up small children. There is a sign at both ends of Grady Street that says, "No Heavy Trucks". Mrs. Kirsch did let code enforcement with Cherokee County know as there is an IGA for this situation with Cherokee County. Code Enforcement did go out and there has been a complaint recorded in their permitting system online. Mrs. Kirsch did some research and called the new owners of the property, which is a company out of Atlanta. She spoke with the CFO who told her they plan on starting construction in 60-90 days and that he would see to it that signs were posted "no parking". He verified his company had not given anyone permission to park on their property. This spurred a conversation with the mayor and council who informed Mrs. Kirsch that there is an agreement they pay the city an amount based on a formula that was discussed in a prior council meeting. This formula had a motion and was approved at the time by the council. The other concern is to address the sewer situation, and per Mr. Rodgers with Turnipseed Engineers there is a large list of items they must first address. Mr. Rodgers has not heard from them in some time. Mrs. Kirsch was directed by Mr. Meier to contact the Cherokee County permitting department first to see what the status of the permits is. Mrs. Kirsch will update the council at the next meeting.
- Mrs. Kirsch updated the council that a few people had paid their property taxes. These were due December 19th and one mailing notice has been sent out. Mrs. Kirsch and the staff will continue to attempt to collect the past due property taxes with another late notice that will be sent certified mail.
- Mrs. Kirsch asked Mr. Meier to help her discuss the MOU on HB581 with the council. The council had previously approved opting into HB581 and has now received an MOU (memorandum of understanding) from Cherokee County to sign. Everyone agreed it would be acceptable to sign this form since it was previously approved to opt in.

Item 12: City Attorney's Report

- Nothing new to report

Item 13: Mayor's Report

- None

Item 14: Council Remarks

- None

Item 15: Adjourn Regular Council Meeting

APPROVED THIS 3rd DAY OF March, 2025.

Mary Helen Lamb

Mary Helen Lamb, Mayor

Attest:

Kim Kirsch

Kim Kirsch, City Clerk